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**CHECKLIST & TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**APPLICANT:** Town of Betterton

**NAME OF SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY:** Betterton Sustainable Community

**Please review the checklist of attachments and furnish all of the attachments that are applicable. Contents of the notebook should be tabbed and organized as follows:**

- ☐ **TAB #1     Applicant Information**
- ☐ **TAB #2     Sustainable Community Baseline Information - In addition to hard copies of the project location map, a detailed listing of parcels (i.e. Parcel ID Numbers) that form the project boundary should be included. Maps should also be submitted in electronic GIS form (shape file). If you have additional comments or questions, please contact Brad Wolters, Senior GIS Specialist, DHCD, wolters@mdhousing.org.**
- ☐ **TAB #3     Local Capacity to Implement Plans & Projects: Attach Sustainable Communities Workgroup roster noted in Section III**
- ☐ **TAB #4     Sustainable Community Plan**
- ☐ **TAB #5     Progress Measures**
- ☐ **TAB #6     Local Support Resolution**
- ☐ **TAB #7     Signed Sustainable Community Application Disclosure Authorization and Certification**

**All documents on this checklist are mandatory.  
Failure to provide the requested document will automatically deny your application.**

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**I. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY APPLICANT INFORMATION****Name of Sustainable Community:** Betterton Sustainable Community

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**Legal Name of Applicant:** Town of Betterton

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**Federal Identification Number:** 52-6003632

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**Street Address:** 100 Main St.

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<b>City:</b> Betterton	<b>County:</b> Kent	<b>State:</b> MD	<b>Zip Code:</b> 21610
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<b>Phone No:</b> 410-348-5522	<b>Fax:</b> 410-348-5131	<b>Web Address:</b> <a href="http://townofbetterton.com/">http://townofbetterton.com/</a>
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**Sustainable Community Contact For Application Status:**

<b>Name:</b> Katina Conn	<b>Title:</b> Town Manager
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<b>Address:</b> Box 339 100 Main Street	<b>City:</b> Betterton	<b>State:</b> MD	<b>Zip Code:</b> 21610
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<b>Phone No:</b> 410-348-5522 x	<b>Fax:</b> 410-348-5131	<b>E-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:katinacomm.betterton@gmail.com">katinacomm.betterton@gmail.com</a>
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**Person to be contacted for Award notification:**

<b>Name:</b> Joseph Stock	<b>Title:</b> Chair, Sustainable Community W
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<b>Address:</b> 115 Plush Mill Rd	<b>City:</b> Wallingford	<b>State:</b> PA	<b>Zip Code:</b> 19086
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<b>Phone No:</b> 610-742-9855 x	<b>Fax:</b> 610-447-2548	<b>E-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:jstock2@gmail.com">jstock2@gmail.com</a>
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## **II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION**

Through this section, applicants will demonstrate that trends and conditions in homeownership, property values, employment, commercial and residential vacancy, community facilities and infrastructure, natural resources, the local business and residential districts show a need for new or continued revitalization reinvestment. Demographic data and trends provided by Applicants should support the choice of the proposed Sustainable Community Area boundary and help form a basis for needs and opportunities to be addressed through the initiatives and projects described in the Sustainable Community Action Plan (Section IV).

POINTS IN THIS SECTION WILL BE AWARDED BASED ON THE SC AREA'S NEED FOR REINVESTMENT AS EVIDENCED BY THOROUGH DESCRIPTIONS OF CURRENT CONDITIONS OR TRENDS (and will not be based upon current or planned revitalization activities which will be covered in Section IV).

### **A. Proposed Sustainable Community Area (s):**

**County:** Kent

**Name of Sustainable Community:** Betterton Sustainable Community

**Include boundary descriptions and a map of the Sustainable Community. In addition to hard copies of the of the project location map, a detailed listing of parcels (i.e. Parcel ID Numbers) that form the project boundary should be included. If possible, maps should also be submitted in electronic GIS form (shape file). If you have additional comments or questions, please contact Brad Wolters, Senior GIS Specialist, DHCD, [Wolters@MdHousing.org](mailto:Wolters@MdHousing.org)**

The Betterton Sustainable Community is generally the middle and most developed part of the Town of Betterton. The Sustainable Community's northern boundary extends along the Sassafras River from the First Avenue properties on the east, along the bottom of Ericsson Avenue, and down the length of Idlewhile Avenue on the west. The Sustainable Community area follows Main Street from the Sassafras through the center of town, to include all of the properties in town limits from First Avenue to Sixth Avenue, to include the developed portion of parcel 1157, the Wastewater Treatment Plant between Second Avenue and Third Avenue and the Water Treatment Plant between Third and Fourth Avenues. Sixth Avenue is the southern boundary on the east side of town. On the western side of town the Sustainable Community area includes the parcels along Ericsson Avenue to Howell Point Road, the southern boundary.

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**II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION**

Approximate number of acres within the SC Area: 161.6

Existing federal, state or local designations (check all that apply):

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Legacy Area              | <input type="checkbox"/> Designated Neighborhood                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Main Street                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Maple Street                                   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local Historic District | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> National Register Historic District |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A & E District                     | <input type="checkbox"/> State Enterprise Zone Special Taxing District  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BRAC                               | <input type="checkbox"/> State Designated TOD                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other(s): _____                    |   |

## **II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION**

### **Prior Revitalization Investments & Smart Growth:**

**(a) List and describe any significant State and local smart growth or revitalization related program investments (for instance, Community Legacy or SC Rehab Tax Credit) that have been invested in the Area since the launching of Maryland's Smart Growth initiative and programs in 1997 (including Housing investment). What impact have these investments made in the community? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)**

In 2000 the Town replaced a condemned walking bridge creating a walking trail between a residential area and the beach. This was performed with a gift from private funds. In 2002, in cooperation with the State Highway Administration, Main Street received new paving along with new sidewalks, updated lighting, and intersection grading, encouraging safe walking within the town. In 2009, in order to preserve an historic Catholic Church scheduled for demolition, the Town purchased the site and planned for a multipurpose Town Hall. Grants were received from the Maryland Historic Trust (\$78,000), the USDA (\$50,000), and Project Open Space (\$126,000) to restore the building and create a beautiful facility which serves as the Town Offices, a meeting room for Town organizations, a meeting site for community movies and concerts, and a small museum to preserve the Town's heritage. In 2008, a grant was received from the Chesapeake Bay Trust to perform a tree survey and to create a plan for urban greening. In 2009 and 2010, a Chesapeake Bay Trust grant of \$19,600 was used along with local volunteers to plant 130 trees and meet the goals of the urban greening plan (40% tree cover within the town). In 2011, a \$1500 Maryland Urban and Community Forest Grant was used to plant an additional 20 trees. In 2014, using a \$3543 grant from the Chesapeake Bay Trust, a rain garden was created and planted in the yard of the Town Hall. This enhanced the beauty of the Town Hall site and decreased runoff water. In 2014, the Town received a grant of \$16,000 from Project Open Space to expand the children's play area in the Town park. In 2014, a \$91,000 grant from the Chesapeake Bay Trust was used to improve storm drains on Wheeler Avenue. The largest project in the Town is a multi-year project to fund a new waste water treatment plant. Since our waste water discharge flows directly into the Bay, a state of the art facility is critical. Grants from the USDA (\$1,250,000) and Maryland Department of Environment (\$477,000) are being used for this project.

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## **II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION**

**(b) Describe any existing barriers to Smart Growth that may affect your jurisdiction or the proposed SC Area. For instance, does your area have higher development fees than outer "cornfields"?**

*(Answer Space 4,000 characters)*

One of the barriers to smart growth in the Town of Betterton is its geographic location. Its location at the end of Route 292 creates no through traffic. Travel is required to work, entertainment, shopping and healthcare.

The lack of public transportation is a major barrier to growth. Other than school buses and on demand transportation from medical and social agencies, there is complete reliance on independently owned automobiles.

One of the most attractive water front tracts of land in the Town, immediately to the west of the developed part of town, has a broad stretch of waterfront property. This 114 acre tract has been placed in a permanent trust, preventing potential waterfront development.

Current water supply in the Town is adequate and of good quality. However, development would require drilling of another well and rehabilitation of the existing water treatment plant.

The dramatic cutback in State Highway User Revenue funds has limited the ability of the Town to maintain and repair its roads.

The public beach is owned by Kent County. Any development or private enterprise on the waterfront would need to be approved and coordinated by the county. Public parking at the beach is also limited and is a barrier to increased use of the beach by Betterton residents and visitors.

The water and sewer infrastructure is badly in need of upgrade. Any future attempts to tie in new structures to the system would risk major damage to existing services. Glass and terra cotta underground mains from the early 1900s leak and are in serious need of replacement.

## **II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION**

### **B. Community Conditions: Strengths and Weaknesses**

**(1) Describe the strengths and weaknesses in the proposed Area's existing built environment. For example, what is the condition of housing? Are there underutilized historic buildings and cultural places? What is the condition and availability of community parks and recreational assets? Are there transportation assets? What is the current condition of community infrastructure such as roads and lighting? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)**

The Town of Betterton is a beautiful small town on the upper Eastern Shore of Maryland with a permanent population of 350. This population increases to 500-600 with the influx of part time residents in the summer. The Town is located on a bluff at the mouth of the Sassafra River looking over the upper reaches of the Chesapeake Bay.

There is a good mix of housing types with a combination of historic Victorian era homes, newer homes, and condominiums. The Rigby Bluff Condominiums overlook the Bay and the public beach and were built in two prime areas on the water front. Another development of town homes was built on the water front on the western side of the historic district. There are three older apartment buildings in town, offering lower cost rental options. Some of the historic houses along Main Street are in need of repair and renovation. Some of the rental units are in very poor condition and are at risk of condemnation. There are no historic buildings which are currently vacant.

There are three community parks in Betterton:

1. The Betterton Town park is located at the entrance to Town and includes children's play equipment, tennis courts, basketball courts, and a baseball facility. A new children's play area is under construction using grant money. The basketball court is in need of repair but funds are not currently available. The public restrooms at the park are also in need of repair. There is a very nice shaded picnic area that is used for family gatherings.

2. The second park is centrally located in the yard of the Community Center. This is a new park with equipment designed for small children. There is a rain garden, recently planted with flowers adjacent to the park. The restored Betterton Fishing Ark is displayed at this park during the summer.

3. The third park is owned by Kent County and includes the public beach. This is a park heavily used by Town residents and visitors. New trees have been planted at the beach with "in lieu of" money from the county. There is an attractive board walk and grassy picnic area. The bath house is in need of repair and updating. There is poor lighting around the beach. There is a shaded pavilion sitting on a bluff above the beach. The stairs leading to the pavilion are beginning to deteriorate. There is a public boat ramp at the beach. This is poorly designed and is not ideal for use at low tide.

Transportation assets are severely lacking. Although there is a taxi service that will come to Betterton, the cost is often prohibitive due to low ridership. Most transportation is by privately owned automobiles. There is some transportation assistance for low income seniors through a tri-county nonprofit called The Must Bus Program.

The community infrastructure is badly in need of repair. Water and sewer pipes are old and in need of replacement.

Many of the streets in the Town need to be resurfaced. There are a number of roads in low lying areas which collect water. Sidewalks in many areas of town are crumbling and unsafe. One of the water front neighborhoods is being threatened by rapid erosion of the bluff. Good lighting is lacking in many areas of town. Because so much of the town is in the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area and most runoff goes in the Bay, there is a great need to focus on reducing impervious surface and stabilizing erosion.

## **II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION**

**(2) Describe the Area's land use/zoning make-up (residential, commercial, industrial, and mixed-use). Is the current land use or zoning conducive to revitalization investment? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)**

B-1 Neighborhood Business--Currently consists of Fire Hall and Marzella's Pizza

C-1 Commercial Marine--Public Beach (Approximately 4 acres)

R-1 Zoning--Single Family Residential with Maximum density of 2.0 units/acre=112 acres

R-2 Zoning--Single Family Residential with maximum density of 4.0 units/acre=131 acres

R-2/IDOD--Single Family Residential Infill District =16 acres

R-3 Zoning--Multiple Family Residential with maximum density 7.5 units/acre=0.28 acres

With this zoning and currently available acreage there is the potential for 814 additional dwelling units and 2035 more residents. The current projection by the Maryland Department of Planning is an increase of 90 residents by the year 2030. (Betterton Comprehensive Plan, 2005 with 2009 Revisions). The Comprehensive Plan also emphasizes that future growth will encourage open spaces, parks, recreational facilities, bike paths and walkways.

The Town of Betterton consists of approximately 500 acres. About one-third of the town (166 acres) is within the Critical Area. The Town of Betterton adopted a Critical Area Program in May of 1988. The policies and goals of the Critical Area Program were incorporated into the Betterton Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations. The land in the Critical Area was mapped into three areas:

Intensely Developed Area (IDA)--Currently 34.18 acres.

Limited Development Area (LDA)--Currently 62 acres

Resource Conservation Areas (RCA)--Currently 72 acres

The Town of Betterton will protect and conserve the Critical Area within its boundaries. The Town will accommodate growth while minimizing impact on water quality, fish, wildlife, habitat, and all natural resources.

The Town of Betterton's land use goals are:

1. Remain a small town, keeping the pace of development compatible with our ability to provide public services.
2. Foster a strong sense of community to ensure that growth areas become attractive, desirable areas in which to live.
3. Promote phased development of larger parcels based on an overall concept plan that integrates new development, including streets and general circulation patterns, into the existing character and fabric of Betterton. (Betterton Comprehensive Plan)

There is very little commercial activity in the Town. Marzella's by the Bay Pizza Restaurant serves as the only restaurant in Town. There is a new restaurant opening soon on the water front adjacent to the Rigby Bluff II condominiums. There is a small museum in the Town Hall. The museum, staffed by volunteers, is open limited hours on Saturday and Sunday nine months out of the year. There are small historically related items for sale in the museum. The small population and short summer busy season from June through August make survival of any business difficult.

The Methodist Church on Main Street is the only active church in Town. This church shares a minister with the Still Pond Methodist Church. Services occur at the two churches on alternate months.

There is sufficient commercially-zoned property, but there are no businesses in these areas. The Betterton Zoning Ordinance also allows small, restricted home occupations of which there are only two at the present time.



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## **II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION**

**3) Describe strengths and weaknesses in basic features of community quality-of-life. For instance, is crime an issue for this SC Area? What is the condition and quality of educational choices available to the community? Are artistic, cultural, or community resources, events or facilities within or accessible to residents in the proposed SC Area? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)**

The quality of life in Betterton is quite good. It is a quiet small town with a relatively low crime rate. The Town pays for additional hours of coverage from county police. There are a number derelict houses in Betterton that allegedly serve as drug houses. Although police have been called to investigate these houses, no definite action has been taken. Speeding is an ongoing problem in town.

Educational options in Betterton are limited. The public schools have a bus system to transport Pre-K through 12th graders to various schools around Kent County. Pre-K through 5th graders attend Galena Elementary. Sixth- through eighth-graders attend Kent County Middle School in Chestertown, and ninth- through twelfth-graders attend Kent County High School in Worton. There is no bus service provided for after school activities. There are adult educational activities related to the Bay and Sassafras River available through Save The Bay and the Sassafras River Association. Adult educational opportunities are also available through Washington College in nearby Chestertown.

There is a strong sense of community in the Town. There are many volunteer groups such as the Betterton Museum Committee and the Garden Club which beautifies the town. The Betterton Community Development Corporation (BCDC) is a 501(c)(3) corporation that works for the general improvement of the Town through a variety of programs. There is a youth group that meets on Friday nights to provide local teenagers with positive activities. The Methodist Church provides space and adult supervision for this group. There is an annual beach clean up which serves to bring the Town together in a common activity. Betterton Day is an annual event on the first Saturday of August. This event which includes a parade, food and craft vendors, and games brings together the Town residents and attracts out of town attendees as well.

## **II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION**

### **C. Natural Resources and Environmental Impact: Strengths and Weaknesses**

**(1) Describe the strengths and weaknesses of the community's "natural environment." in or near the Sustainable Community Area. What is the current condition of key natural resources - lands, air, water, watersheds, tree canopy, other? If the community is located in a coastal zone, what risks might the community be subject to associated with climate induced sea level rise? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)**

The Town of Betterton is located in Kent County, Maryland. It is situated at the head of the Chesapeake Bay, and it overlooks the confluence of the Sassafras, Elk, and Susquehanna Rivers. Nestled amidst the bluffs of the Chesapeake Bay, the town's northern boundary, Betterton covers approximately 500 acres before joining the rural countryside of Kent County. Roughly one third of the Town is in the Critical Area. Presently there are 34.18 acres of Intensely Developed Area (IDA). Betterton will encourage development in the current IDA areas or outside of the Critical Area.

There is a single tributary stream that flows year around. It discharges into the bay at the end of Idlewhile Avenue. There are several springs found at the base of the cliffs along the shore line. One of these, known as the "Chesapeake Spring" historically provided water to one of the Hotels which graced the beach. It has been recently labeled as an unsafe drinking source.

There are some non-tidal wetlands on the eastern edge of Town. The Buffer is defined as 50 feet from the edge of the non-tidal wetland area.

Tidal buffers are defined in the Chesapeake Bay Critical Areas Criteria as a naturally vegetated area or man-made vegetated area established or managed to protect aquatic wetland, shoreline, and terrestrial environment from manmade disturbances. The buffer zone normally extends 100 feet inland from mean high tide and from tidal wetlands. The buffer may be extended in certain circumstances, including any building contiguous to a steep slope or adjacent to a sensitive area. Most of the Betterton shore line is in the buffer. Buffer exempt areas include the shoreline by the public beach that contains buildings, parking lots, and boat ramps.

The potential source of flooding for the Town is the Chesapeake Bay. The one hundred-year flood plain is limited to the beach and beach parking lot. No development areas are currently located within the 100-year flood plain. In conjunction with the Sassafras River Association and Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), wooded ravines were identified within the Sassafras Watershed. These ravines may help reduce the sediment loading to the Sassafras River. There are some ravines in the Betterton Sustainable Community which could be utilized and could be eligible for NRCS funding.

Betterton has extensive wooded areas which are protected under the Betterton Forestation Conservation Ordinance and the Betterton Critical Areas Program. In 2008, the Town undertook a tree survey and developed the "Betterton Urban and Community Forest Master Plan." Under this plan, completed in 2009, it was determined that the Town had a 39% tree canopy cover. Based on the tree survey, completed in coordination with Washington College, a goal of 45% tree cover was suggested. This translated to a need for 101 additional trees. Using an Urban Greening grant from the Chesapeake Bay Trust, 135 additional trees were planted, meeting and exceeding the 45% goal. Subsequent tree cutting under power lines performed by Delmarva Power has decreased the tree canopy below the 45% level. Additional tree planting to return to the 45% goal is anticipated under the SC Plan.

One of the major concerns for the Town is significant shore erosion along the bluffs fronting on the Chesapeake Bay. Bayside Boulevard has traditionally been a major community asset in that it provides expansive views of the Chesapeake Bay. It is a frequent walking site for community residents. There is a walking bridge across a gully on Bayside Boulevard which leads to the eastern extent of Bayside Boulevard and to the community steps to the beach. The SC Plan will address this shore erosion and develop a plan for erosion control.

Another major concern is runoff due to excessive impervious surfaces. In many cases, this is due to poorly designed drainage that maximizes direct drainage into the Bay.

## **II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION**

**(2) Describe the strengths and weaknesses of any current efforts to reduce the community's "carbon footprint" or impact on the environment. Is recycling (commercial or residential) available to minimize waste? Are there current efforts to encourage the purchase and availability of fresh local food and other local products and services to the community? Describe any current energy or water conservation efforts that may be underway. If the community has not implemented one of the above initiatives, has the community identified a need or interest to pursue these or other efforts to reduce environmental impact, for instance through the new Sustainable Maryland Certified initiative? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)**

Betterton has a number of strategies to decrease the community's carbon footprint. There is a voluntary residential recycling program. There is regular encouragement to increase recycling at Town Meetings and in the Town Newsletter. Recycling rates have continued to increase for the last three years.

Although there are a number of rooftop solar units on residential homes, there is no rooftop solar on Town structures. The SC Plan proposes a solar array, possibly off site, on nearby farmland. The SC Plan will also develop educational materials for residents to promote the use of solar energy. The Fire Hall is a possible site for solar panels as well. Two homes in Betterton are using geothermal energy.

Water conservation is encouraged through the use of rain barrels. The SC Plan will attempt to expand rain barrel usage and rain garden development. Residential water conservation is encouraged through bills based on metered usage.

Betterton is taking steps to limit the ecological impact on its greatest natural resource, the Sassafras River. Betterton has secured funding to upgrade the Betterton Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP). This new plant will use Enhanced Nutrient Removal (ENR) technology, allowing the sewage treatment plant to provide a state of the art level of nutrient removal. The current plant does no nutrient removal. The Town meets state goals only because the flows are so low that we do not exceed the minimum standards. The ability to remove nutrients will be critical to the health of the Sassafras River and the Chesapeake Bay. This upgrade will allow for NPDES permits, which increases the requirements for effluent load, flow, and nutrient concentration. The NPDES permits should also be consistent with the assumptions made in the TMDL. Final design and permitting is underway. Construction is anticipated to begin in the next 12-18 months. As noted above, the SC Plan suggests a possible solar array to provide energy for the WWTP.

The Town runs its own yard waste collection program. This waste is turned into mulch which is provided at no cost to citizens.

Efforts are underway to decrease storm water runoff. Subject to future grant funding availability, the Town is currently developing bid documents that require alternate quotes for more costly (but ecologically preferable) paving alternatives such as porous concrete, grid pavers, and permeable concrete interlocking pavers.

The Town is currently completing its application for status as Sustainable Maryland Certified.

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## **II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION**

**(3) Describe the strengths and weaknesses of the jurisdiction's current stormwater management practices and how these may affect the proposed SC Area. Is redevelopment and retrofitting of infrastructure an issue or opportunity in this SC Area? Stormwater runoff is a significant source of pollution to Maryland's streams and the Chesapeake Bay. Buildings constructed before 1985 have little or no stormwater controls, and development between 1985 and 2010 have some controls. Updated stormwater regulations passed by Maryland's General Assembly in 2010 require that development and redevelopment projects utilize stringent stormwater controls. Sustainable Community Areas may have opportunities for redevelopment practices that can reduce stormwater flows. (Answer Space 4,000 characters)**

The Town of Betterton is not required by MDE to submit NPDES storm water permits. The Town implements the Storm Water Management Ordinance which sets regulations governing storm water. The Town ordinance encourages responsible growth and protects the health of the Chesapeake Bay. The Town promotes the use of non-structural storm water BMPs over structural BMPs. It also regulates residential and commercial landowners, encouraging them to utilize technology to reduce the volume and improve the quality of runoff from their property.

Generally, impervious cover includes rooftops and roads, and driveways which prevent storm water from infiltrating the ground. Significant water quality and habitat impacts are observed in streams and watersheds with average impervious cover of about 10% or greater. Impervious surfaces are calculated during development project reviews including evaluation of the project's storm water management plan, and Critical Area requirements. Recently the Critical Area Program has changed its impervious requirements to percentage of lot coverage requirements. The Town of Betterton adopted the Critical Area Program and a series of implementing provisions contained in the Betterton Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations in May of 1988. The Town of Betterton is about 500 acres. Roughly one-third of the Town or 166 acres is within the Critical Area.

The Town supports a manageable increase in storm water runoff through the enforcement of its Storm Water Management Ordinance. In addition to traditional storm water management practices, the Town promotes bio-retention as a means of treating storm water runoff. Bio-retention or rain gardens provide storm water treatment that enhances the water quality by using soil treatment and plantings to remove pollutants from storm water runoff. The SC Plan promotes additional rain garden use and also the expanded use of rain barrels. The SC Plan also will promote educational efforts to discourage the use of fertilizers and pesticides on lawns.

## **II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION**

### **D. Economic Conditions & Access to Opportunity: Strengths and Weaknesses**

**(1) Describe the jurisdiction's current economic strengths and weaknesses. For example, are there distinct economic drivers in the area or region that will affect access to job opportunities and the progress of the SC Plan? What are the main barriers to the Area's economic competitiveness? What is the current level of broadband access available to serve residents, businesses and public facilities? What efforts are currently in place to increase worker skills and employment? Describe trends in employment rates and business formation. (Answer Space 4,000 characters)**

The main economic driver in the Betterton SC is its waterfront location on the Chesapeake Bay. Its beautiful views of the Bay and the expansive public beach continue to attract people to the Town. The beach front location continues to attract vacation home and condominium buyers. The public beach, owned by Kent County, attracts many swimmers, sun bathers, and picnic-goers to the beach from May to October. The SC Workgroup and results from our Town survey emphasize that the Bay and the natural resources of the Town will always be its primary attraction. As such, many of the pieces of the SC Plan will preserve and enhance public access to the views of the Bay and endeavor to attract more tourists and boaters to the Town.

The primary barrier to the SC Area's economic competitiveness is the small size of the Town and its lack of amenities including shopping and restaurants. Its location at the end of Route 292 with no through traffic is a disadvantage economically, but at the same time contributes to the quiet, peaceful nature of the Town and beach. Lack of public transportation is also a primary barrier to economic development. The public beach, which was at one point quite derelict, was taken over by Kent County leading to dramatic improvement in the maintenance and amenities at the beach. However, the fact that the beach is owned by the county is a barrier to private enterprise on the water front. Parking at the public beach is limited and may limit broader use of the beach.

Broadband access is currently provided by Atlantic Broadband which provides medium speed (less than optimal) usually reliable WiFi. There is a fiber network that comes into the edge of Betterton but is not currently being used by residents. An Internet Service Provider (ISP) is needed for distribution. The SC Workgroup has discussed the possibility of the Town's partnering with a service provider to enhance broadband access.

Workforce training is provided in the region by Chesapeake College, which offers some courses in nearby Chestertown as well as on line training, professional licensing, ESL, GED, and Adult Basic Education. Washington College in Chestertown also offers adult education courses through their Academy of Lifelong Learning.

Unemployment rate of White non-Hispanic males is 1.1%.

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## **II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION**

**(2) Describe the jurisdiction's housing market and access to affordable workforce housing. What are the trends in residential construction (rental and homeownership), homeownership rate, foreclosure rate and, property values. Describe how and whether your jurisdiction's prevailing housing costs - both homeownership and rental - are affordable to households below 120% AMI, 80% AMI and 50% AMI. What efforts are in place currently to house individuals, families and the disabled at or below the AMI levels described above? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)**

The housing market in Betterton is going through a transition as the town is morphing away from tourism and developing into a residential community. Hotels, which 40 years ago housed tourists, have either been turned into apartment buildings or torn down and replaced with either single family homes or condominiums. Summer cottages are being enlarged to become year around dwelling units.

Today Betterton's housing is a mixture of 348 dwelling units made up of single dwellings, condominiums and apartment units. Of the 348 units, 299 are owner occupied and 49 are rental units. Sixty-two percent of the total units are used on a seasonal basis, while 38 percent are occupied by full time residents. There are 28 vacant lots of various sizes within the Town limits. Two of these lot units have a combined 130 acres. This gives the Town tremendous potential for growth.

Because of its small town setting, the cost of homes in Betterton and rental prices are low in comparison to Chestertown, the closest larger town. This lower cost has been attracting younger families. The combination of the lower cost plus the beautiful vistas overlooking the Sassafras River also have been attracting empty nesters who are buying with the thought of becoming permanent residents after retiring.

Betterton was hit hard by the recent recession. During this period its growth stagnated. There were four foreclosures in the Town. Recently, there has been a revival of sorts. Houses that were on the market for long periods of time are starting to sell and two new houses were built in 2013. Also, many houses are being rehabbed. There were 19 building permits issued in 2012 and 11 permits in 2013. The mean price for a house in 2009 was \$302,086 while the state average was \$429, 019.

There is some low income housing in some of the older apartment buildings in Town. These are in the \$300-400 price range per month. The median household income for apartments without a mortgage was \$39,286 The median gross rent in the Town was \$929.

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## **II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION**

**(3) Describe the SC Area's demographic trends (with respect to age, race, household size, household income, educational attainment, or other relevant factors).** *(Answer Space 4,000 characters)*

Population at the 2010 census was 345. There were 175 females and 170 males. Population by race: American Indian 3, Asian 2, African American 10, White 319, other 11. Population by age: Age 0-4 19, Age 5-17 45, Age 18-64 226, Age 65 and over 55. Median resident's age is 47 years.

Estimated median household income in 2012 \$60,284 (It was \$36,477 in 2000). Estimated per capita income \$29,283. Median house or condo value in 2012 \$220,505. Median gross rent in 2012 \$1,051.

Residents who live in poverty: 4.7%.

Education Level: High school or higher 96.1%, Bachelor's degree or higher 18.7%, Graduate or professional degree 12.8%. Unemployed 6.1%

Size of households: 2 persons 55, 3 persons 11, 4 persons 22, 5 persons 6, 6 persons 2, 7 or more persons 2.

### **III. LOCAL CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT PLANS & PROJECTS**

#### **A. Organizational Structure:**

**Describe the Applicant's organizational structure. Specifically, which organizations are members in the Sustainable Communities Workgroup and who are the respective staff? Who are the leaders, and how will the Workgroup advisor or staff manage implementation of the SC Area Plan? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)**

The primary driver for the Sustainable Community effort is the Sustainable Community Workgroup. Members include:

1. Joseph R. Stock, Chair and Contact for Application Status
2. Katina Conn, Town Manager
3. David Dahlstrom, Maryland Department of Planning
4. Barbara Felling, BCDC
5. Shelley Herman, Local Community Contact and SC Workgroup
6. Tanya Hutcheson, SC Workgroup
7. Kim Kohl, Sierra Club
8. Diana LeClair, SC Workgroup
9. John LeClair, SC Workgroup
10. Harry Marcy, Betterton Planning Commission
11. Ed Zellers, Betterton Planning Commission
12. Joan Zellers, BCDC, Sassafras River Association

This committee has broad representation from the community, including full time residents and part time residents. There is representation from the Betterton Town Manager, The Kent County Department of Planning, Former Town Council Member, Member of Betterton Planning and Zoning, Member of Appeals Board for Planning and Zoning, and the President of the Betterton Community Development Corporation. Several members are active in the Sassafras River Association.

Currently each member of the committee is assigned a part of the application to research and write. Resources for the committee and initial drafts of completed sections were shared on "Dropbox". The final draft will be collated by Joseph Stock and approved by the Committee.

Once the Sustainable Community (SC) application is completed and, assuming Betterton will be designated, the SC Workgroup will prioritize the action plan. Along with Mayor and Council, the SC Workgroup will help to determine which areas are most critical and will have the most positive impact on the Town. Joseph Stock and Katina Conn will work with the SC Workgroup as well as Mayor and Council to begin grant applications which allow for completion of the Plan goals. SC Workgroup members will champion various projects along with other Town volunteers.



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### **III. LOCAL CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT PLANS & PROJECTS**

#### **B.Organizational Experience:**

**Describe the Applicant organization's past experience in administering revitalization plans and projects. Describe the roles of the members of the Sustainable Communities Workgroup, including their experience in implementing revitalization initiatives. What are the strengths and challenges of the capacity of these groups with respect to implementation of the SC Plan? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)**

The Town of Betterton has successfully managed hundreds of thousands of dollars in Federal and State grants from various organizations including the Chesapeake Bay Trust, Project Open Space, Maryland Historic Trust, US Food and Drug Administration, Maryland Urban and Community Forest Grant, and the Maryland Department of the Environment. The members of the SC Workgroup have grant writing experience and have diverse professional and academic backgrounds in sustainability initiatives.

1. Tree Planting Assessment and Planting of 135 trees in Town to meet the 45% tree cover goal--Joseph Stock, Ed Zellers, Joan Zellers
2. Town Hall Community Center preservation and conversion--Joan Zellers, Ed Zellers
3. Rain Garden Project--Joan Zellers, Ed Zellers, Shelley Herman, Joseph Stock
4. Sixth Avenue Playground--Shelley Herman
5. Waste Water Treatment Plan Upgrade--Shelley Herman, Ed Zellers, Katina Conn
6. Wheeler Avenue Greening Project--Shelley Herman, Katina Conn

SC Workgroup members have connections with the Sassafras River Association and The Sierra Club. There are also numerous additional community volunteer resources which bring broad experience and expertise to sustainable initiatives. Among these are the Betterton Community Development Corporation, whose goal is to develop and participate in programs which benefit the Town of Betterton. The local volunteer fire department is also a source of volunteers.

The major challenge for the Town of Betterton is a small employed staff with many demands on their time and very limited resources. The SC Workgroup members are volunteers, many with full time employment so that time to volunteer is limited.

### **III. LOCAL CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT PLANS & PROJECTS**

#### **C. Public Input:**

**How did residents and other stakeholders in the community provide input to Action Plan described below in Section IV?** *(Answer Space 4,000 characters)*

The SC Workgroup, with the leadership of Kim Kohl, developed a Town survey which was distributed on "Survey Monkey" with hard copy surveys distributed in public sites. The results of that survey were reviewed in a meeting of the SC Work Group and guided a discussion to help determine the major areas of focus for the SC Plan.

An explanatory letter of the SC application process was sent to all Betterton residents along with the July 2014 newsletter. In this letter, residents were urged to respond to the survey and give feedback to the SC Workgroup about their vision for sustainable growth.

There were discussions and presentations about the SC project in Mayor and Council meetings. These are public meetings advertised in advance.

## **IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

The Sustainable Community Action Plan (SC Plan or Plan) is meant to be a multi-year investment strategy - a strategic set of revitalization initiatives and projects that local partners believe will increase the economic vitality and livability of their community, increased prosperity for local households and improved health of the surrounding environment. The Plan should be flexible enough to be updated regularly and renewed every five years as the community envisions new goals. The priority initiatives and projects in the SC Plan should improve the livability of community places -- residential, commercial, or other public or private properties - and create new work, retail, recreational and housing opportunities for residents. These projects should also reduce the environmental impact of the community through water and energy resource conservation and management strategies. In this way, the Plan can be a road map for local stakeholders as well as State agencies to work together to create a more a sustainable and livable community.

### **A. Supporting existing communities & reducing environmental impacts.**

**(1) A community's approach to Smart Growth generally includes two inter-related areas of focus: encouraging reinvestment and growth in existing communities; and, discouraging growth that degrades natural resources, and farms and rural landscapes. Broadly describe your jurisdiction's Smart Growth approach and any significant accomplishments made over the last decade or so. (Answer Space 4,000 characters)**

Betterton is a picturesque small town overlooking the Chesapeake Bay. Its residents and the Town leadership of Mayor and Council are committed to smart growth and preserving the natural resources of the region, particularly the Chesapeake Bay and Sassafra River. The Betterton Comprehensive Plan plays a key role in guiding the policies for development in the Town. Betterton's objectives are:

1. To remain a small town, keeping the pace of development compatible with the Town's ability to provide public services.
2. Foster a strong sense of community to ensure that growth areas become attractive, desirable areas in which to live.
3. Promote phased development of larger parcels based on an overall concept plan that integrates new development, including streets and general circulation patterns, into the existing character and fabric of Betterton.

One of the top priorities for the Town of Betterton is to replace and upgrade its Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP). Betterton owns and operates a minor treatment plant (handles less than 500,000 gpd) The treatment plant was built in 1969 and is in need of upgrade. As a minor treatment plant, the Betterton plant is not required to meet MDE nutrient caps. However, any upgrade to an existing plant is required to meet these caps. According to the MDE, the Town is currently exceeding and is projected to exceed the minimum sewer gpd demand estimate. Phosphorus loading is the primary limiting factor. The Town of Betterton began a project in 2009 to replace its aging plant and upgrade to meet Enhanced Nutrient Removal (ENR) standards. A series of grants totaling \$1,725,640 has been applied for and received. Sufficient funds are available to build the new treatment plant. Construction should begin in the next 12-18 months.

In 2009, under the direction of Dr. Carl Gallegos of Washington College, a Community Forest Master Plan was developed for the Town of Betterton. A tree survey was performed and a proposed plan created to reach the goal of 45% tree cover in the Town of Betterton. Subsequently, using \$19,000 in grant money from the Chesapeake Bay Trust and extensive volunteer in-kind donations, a plan was created to plant trees on public lands and also to work with residents to plant trees on private property. Another grant was received from a Maryland Urban and Community Forest Grant. Additional "in lieu of" funds from the Critical Area program were received from Kent County to plant trees on the public beach owned by the county. A total of 135 trees were planted throughout the Town in areas of need suggested by the Community Forest Master Plan. This allowed the Town to meet and exceed the 45% goal. Trees were planted by community volunteers partnering with local nurseries which supplied the trees at discounted prices.

In 2009, the Town of Betterton purchased the Most Precious Blood Catholic Church and the large parcel of land on which it is located in the center of Betterton. This property sits on the top of a hill with views of the Chesapeake Bay. It had been slated for purchase and demolition by a developer. Using grant money from the USDA, Maryland Historic Trust, and Project Open Space, an architect was hired to develop a plan for renovation and reuse of this space as a Town Hall, public meeting space, and museum. This project was completed in 2011 and resulted in a beautiful, well-designed facility. Tree planting grants were used to landscape the site with native trees and shrubs. In 2014, A Chesapeake Bay Trust grant was used to create a rain garden in the side yard of the Community Center. This receives all of the rain runoff from the building.

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#### **IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

**(2) Describe any major investments in community infrastructure -water, stormwater, sewer, sidewalk, lighting, etc. -- that must be undertaken in order to improve the readiness or competitiveness of the proposed SC Area for private investment and compliance (if applicable) with TMDL regulations. Addressing the stormwater during redevelopment can reduce the pollution entering our streams and contribution to the restoration of the Chesapeake Bay. Investments in infrastructure, generally, can be an important catalyst for new private investment in the community. (Answer Space 4,000 characters)**

Please note the description of the replacement of the Waste Water Treatment Plant described in the previous section. This is a critical piece of any future readiness for private investment. Sewage collection infrastructure also needs to be studied for future upgrade designs.

The current water supply for the Town is supplied by two wells, a water treatment plant, and a 125,000 gallon elevated storage tank. There are 3.5 miles of distribution piping. As of 2009, there were 306 dwellings and three businesses in Town supplied by Town water. Although the wells and treatment plant are in good operating condition, the Comprehensive Plan indicates that the need for well maintenance and treatment rehabilitation should be considered a priority. At current usage, the Town could add supply for an additional 92 households with the current water system. The current reserve capacity has been a major concern for Mayor and Council. Any proposed major development would need to provide for the expansion of the supply, treatment, storage, and distribution of additional homes and businesses for the next 10-20 years. The current water distribution system is made up of two inch to eight inch asbestos cement pipe. The new Kent County requirements for sprinkler systems in new construction is not supported in many areas of the Town by the existing small pipe with insufficient volume flow to supply the sprinkler systems. Much of the pipe in the Town needs to be replaced.

The sidewalks in Town are in severe need of replacement. There are many sidewalks on Wheeler Avenue and on Ericsson Avenue that are cracked, broken, and uneven. In many cases pedestrians are required to walk in the street to provide safe walking, particularly for strollers and other wheeled transportation. We are concerned that virtually none of our sidewalks meet ADA requirements. It is our hope to enhance the walkability of Betterton through improved walkways and trails. We believe that this will enhance the attractiveness for future development.

#### **IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

**(3) Describe policies, initiatives or projects that the community will undertake or expand in order to reduce the SC Area's impact on the environment. Examples include but are not limited to: conservation or management of stormwater through retrofitting of streets and by-ways (Green Streets, rain gardens, etc.); retrofitting of facilities and homes for energy conservation; implementation of "green" building codes and mixed-use zoning; recycling of waste; clean-ups of watersheds; and, encouragement of "Buy Local" approaches that benefit local suppliers and food producers. A comprehensive menu of such actions may be found through the nonprofit Sustainable Maryland Certified initiative. (Answer Space 4,000 characters)**

The Town of Betterton has received a grant from the Chesapeake Bay Trust to create a "green street" on Wheeler Avenue. This project will include replacement and upgrade of storm water drainage systems, planting of trees and shrubs to decrease storm water runoff, reduction of impervious surface, and replacement of a failing retaining wall along Wheeler Avenue to improve storm water flow patterns. Wheeler Avenue is currently the most problematic street in Town for runoff and structural instability. Only the first phase of this project has been funded, including design and implementation of a short segment of the street. Further funding will be sought under the SC Plan to complete this project.

The SC Plan also calls for development of opportunities to purchase low cost rain barrels and development of rain gardens where possible.

The SC Plan calls for the completion of plans for the waste water treatment plant which will decrease nutrient levels flowing into the Sassafras River. There are also plans to plant trees around the WWTP for sound abatement and for esthetic appearance of the WWTP. The SC Plan suggests the use of a solar array as an alternative energy source to supply the projected \$10,000 plus annual energy cost of the WWTP.

The SC Plan calls for studying the current Town water supply and making plans for future upgrades and expansion of the capacity.

There is an annual clean up of Betterton Beach performed with the cooperation of community volunteers, Betterton maintenance staff, and Kent County maintenance staff. There are also annual clean up projects in the Sassafras River Watershed including elementary school class participation. The Town and the SC Work Group have close ties to the Sassafras River Association which promotes these projects.

There is an outstanding farmer's market in adjacent Chestertown each Saturday morning from April to December. This provides a wide array of local fruits, vegetables, flowers, and shrubs. There are also a variety of hand made crafts and jewelry. This provides an excellent supply of fresh farm produce for local restaurants and residents. Also, during Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays, foods and crafts are sold.

There is a CSA program available to Town residents in nearby Galena, and widespread vegetable stands.

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#### **IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

**(4) Which community groups or stakeholders will be key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)**

The SC Workgroup will coordinate the grant applications and individuals from the group will be involved in various parts of the Plan.

Mayor and Council and the Town Manager have taken the lead on applications for grants for the WWTP. They will also coordinate the final plans, bidding process and initiation of the project.

Joseph Stock will take the lead on the tree planting initiative along with community volunteers and private nursery owners. In past projects, local nursery owners have provided discounted rates on trees and planting.

Sidewalk replacement will be coordinated by members of the SC Workgroup as well as Mayor and Council. The sidewalk in front of the Town Hall with the large drop-off related to an adjacent storm water drain will be targeted initially. Discussions will be initiated with the Maryland Highway Department to help fund this project.

The water treatment plant project will be initiated after completion of the WWTP upgrades. There is an existing study from 3 years ago which will be reviewed by the SC Workgroup, Mayor and Council for continued validity. Grants will be sought for water supply upgrades. Upgrades in water distribution infrastructure will also be needed.

The Wheeler Avenue Greening Project will be overseen by Mayor and Council, and the Town Manager. Additional opportunities will be sought to improve water and sewer infrastructure. These will be driven by the SC Workgroup, Mayor and Council, and Town Manager.

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#### **IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

##### **B. Valuing communities and neighborhoods -- building upon assets and building in amenities:**

**(1) What are the key assets that exist in the community upon which the Plan's projects and initiatives will build? Assets may include physical assets such as parks and historic structures and also civic and economic assets such as employers, educational institutions, and cultural organizations and activities. (Answer Space 4,000 characters)**

The Key assets in the Town of Betterton are its waterfront location with expansive views of the Chesapeake Bay and its unusually large and beautiful public beach. Many of the initiatives in the SC Plan relate to preservation and improvement of the waterfront and the beach. There is also a large public park at the entrance of Town and a smaller park adjacent to the Town Hall. There are large tracts of farmland on the edge of Town. The Comprehensive Plan points out the importance of maintaining the agricultural neighbors surrounding the Town.

The history of Betterton is also an asset to be treasured. The recorded history of the Town dates back to 1664 when the Fishall Patent was granted. In 1715, Edward Crew leased the Fish Hall and the name of the Town was changed to Crew's Landing. In 1851, Richard Townsend Turner named the town Betterton after the family of his wife. In the later part of the 19th century and into the late 20th century, Betterton became a large tourist attraction, primarily due to its beautiful beach. These historic roots and the historic structures that remain are important parts of the fabric of Betterton. In 1984, the Betterton Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historical Places by the United States Department of Interior. The SC Plan seeks to preserve the important historic nature of Betterton.

The natural resources with which Betterton is blessed include the Sassafras River and The Chesapeake Bay. The SC Plan seeks to preserve these treasures through wise waste water treatment, minimizing storm water runoff, and minimizing shore erosion.

Betterton is blessed with excellent Town leadership through Mayor and Council. There are multiple civic groups working to improve the Town including the Betterton Community Development Corporation and the Betterton Volunteer Fire Company, and the Betterton Museum Committee.

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#### **IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

**(2) What policies, initiatives or projects will reuse or enhance the historical assets, traditional business districts/Main Streets and cultural resources of the community? What actions will reinforce your community's authentic "sense of place" and historic character? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)**

The preservation and renovation of the Most Precious Blood Catholic Church into the Town Hall and Museum was a major historic save carried out by the Town of Betterton. This attractive site has become the center of civic activity including meetings of Mayor and Council, meetings of other Town committees, and use by a variety of organizations for meeting space. The small museum on the edge of the main meeting hall celebrates the historic heritage of Betterton during the height of the tourism years. The museum also shows the beautiful art that is the decoy carving of Charlie Joyner, one of Betterton's most famous former residents. The Town Hall hosts visiting music groups for public concerts on a periodic basis. Free movie night is a feature offered to the children of Betterton.

The SC Plan proposes to develop an historic walking/bike trail along the waterfront and through the Town of Betterton. This will include Bayside Boulevard, the public steps extending to the beach, and a walkway along the edge of the beach. We hope to designate this as the "Crews Landing Historic Trail". Plans include preservation and improvement of the Bayside Boulevard bluff to control erosion, renovation of the historic public steps leading to the beach, and improvement of sidewalks throughout the Town.

The SC Plan proposes continued efforts to increase the tree canopy, especially along Main Street. Grants will be sought to plant trees and shrubs to further beautify Main Street. A facade upgrade program will be initiated along Main Street and in other parts of Town. Efforts will be made to preserve the historic character of the houses.



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#### **IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

**(3) Describe policies, initiatives or projects that will increase community access to green spaces, parks and other amenities? A community can gain social and physical benefits from access to a healthy natural environment. The inclusion of complete streets, trails, green space, parks and trees contribute to the character and health of a community. Examples might include improvements to the tree canopy by planting street trees, improving local neighborhood streams, or reusing a vacant lot for a new community park or playground.***(Answer Space 4,000 characters)*

The SC Plan seeks to continue our previous urban greening efforts. As previously noted, the Town of Betterton in 2009 received a grant from the Chesapeake Bay Trust to plant trees in an effort to increase our tree cover to 45%. The Town planted 135 trees, meeting and exceeding the 45% threshold. In 2012, Delmarva Power received special permission from the Town of Betterton and the Critical Areas Commission to cut down numerous trees under the power lines with no mitigation. As a result, we have again fallen below the 45% tree canopy level. We will seek grants to plant trees and shrubs to meet and exceed the 45% goal.

The SC plan proposes tree planting, shrub planting and beautification along Main Street and throughout the Town. An effort will be made to encourage rain gardens and rain barrels to decrease storm water runoff.

A \$91,000 grant has been received from the Chesapeake Bay Trust to create a green street along Wheeler Avenue. This project includes improvement of storm water runoff, planting of trees and shrubs, reduction of impervious surface, and building of a retaining wall to modify storm water flow. Only the first (design) phase of this project has been funded. Additional grant funding will be sought to complete this project.

The Town continues to improve its parks. The tree planting project in 2009 has led to three beautiful groves of trees on the grassy park adjacent to Betterton Beach. This is a site of frequent picnics, family gatherings, and bicycle races. These trees are now reaching a size which provides for shade as well as enhancing the appearance of the Beach.

The SC Plan provides for development of improved walkways and bike trails throughout the Town. There is a plan to develop the Crews Landing Historic Trail along the waterfront and throughout the Town. Efforts will be made to develop a walking and biking trail through the land to the west of the Betterton Historic District, currently in a land trust.

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#### **IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

**(4) Which community groups or stakeholders will be key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section?** *(Answer Space 4,000 characters)*

The SC Workgroup will help to develop grant funding and coordinate the initiatives. The Town of Betterton, Mayor and Council will help to prioritize projects and provide support. Betterton Tree Committee will continue to work on improving the tree canopy. The State Highway Administration will be involved in programs along Main Street on the state roadway. Volunteer groups including the Betterton Community Development Corporation and the Betterton Volunteer Fire Company will help to provide in kind volunteer labor for the projects.

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## **IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

### **C. Enhancing economic competitiveness**

**(1) What economic development policies, initiatives or projects will improve the economy through investments in small businesses and other key employment sectors? What economic development and business incentives will you build upon or implement as part of the SC Plan? Examples could include but are not limited to: green-taping for expedited project application review; permitting and inspection; job training; business tax credits; and, revolving loan funds. (Answer Space 4,000 characters)**

The primary economic opportunities are related to increasing the use of the public beach. Improvements to the beach, bath house, and Town walkways will make Betterton more attractive to visitors. Improved beach parking and traffic control around the beach will be important initiatives. Public relations initiatives will be undertaken to promote Betterton Beach as a safe, clean, convenient option for regional residents.

The SC Work Group has suggested commercialization of the beach including kayak and small boat rentals and possibly a gas station for boats on the Chesapeake Bay.

The Town is always interested in housing development or commercial development if it occurs in a well-organized way and sustains the historic flavor of the Town. Developers would be required to participate in improving water, sewer, and roadway infrastructure. Expedited project application review could be provided.

The Comprehensive Plan calls for the promotion of small businesses, home occupations, and part-time ventures to stimulate economic activity. The Plan also calls for improving communication systems. The SC Plan calls for developing high speed internet by utilization of fiber that already extends to the edge of Town.

A review of the Town's zoning and permitting ordinances is currently underway and will consider business-friendly revisions.

**IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

**(2) What workforce development policies, initiatives or projects will increase access to jobs and economic opportunity for residents in the SC Area? Do you have a goal for job creation? Are green jobs an opportunity in the jurisdiction or SC Area? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)**

The economic initiatives in the previous section would likely create a small number of jobs. The Town of Betterton has no specific workforce development policies. Job creation and green jobs are developed in the county by the Kent County Economic Development Office.

**IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

**(3) Describe whether the Sustainable Community will be impacted by the Base Re-alignment and Closure (BRAC) activities in Maryland. If impacted, how do the initiatives and projects in your Plan complement BRAC-related growth? (If not applicable, all ten points will be assessed based on answers to questions 1, 2, and 4) (Answer Space 4,000 characters)**

There is a small group of residents that works at Aberdeen Proving Grounds and commutes via water from Betterton to Aberdeen daily. Noise and vibrations from the testing at Aberdeen currently impact both the natural and built environment in Town. The impact, if any, on the Town from BRAC 2017 is unknown at this time.

#### **IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

**(4) Which community groups or stakeholders will be key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section? *(Answer Space 4,000 characters)***

Town of Betterton, SC Workgroup, Betterton Community Development Corporation

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#### **IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

##### **D. Promoting access to quality affordable housing.**

**(1) What housing policies, initiatives or projects will expand housing choices - rental and homeownership -- for people of a range of ages, incomes, and also for disabled individuals? How will these actions address the current housing conditions and needs noted in Section II? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)**

The Town of Betterton is committed to expanding housing choices. The Town will encourage higher density and infill projects. The importance of the strong sense of community and local neighborhoods will be recognized. Preservation of historic structures and resources will be an important part of any development. Maintaining public safety and encouraging private maintenance of property will be important in maintaining the character of the Town.

The SC Plan calls for improvement of all damaged walkways in the Town, many of which are currently unsafe. ADA compliance for walkways and crosswalks will be sought. Current walkways and bike paths will be organized into the Crew's Landing Historic Trail. This will provide for continued access to waterfront and beach-side walkways which are an important part of Betterton's history.

Tree planting and beautification along roadways will make the Town more attractive to visitors and potential home buyers. Similarly, planned improvements of Betterton Beach will make it even more attractive and convenient.

There are currently no proposals for building of low income housing or handicapped housing.

Because of the large proportion of residents who are approaching or have reached retirement age, investigation into possible senior housing options is warranted.

#### **IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

**(2) Will these housing initiatives or projects increase access to transit or community walkability and/or decrease transportation costs? In other words, will the housing investments result in more people living near work or town centers, or able to more conveniently reach work, school, shopping and/or recreation?** *(Answer Space 4,000 characters)*

The initiatives described in the previous section will improve walking and bicycle transportation in the Town. Development of safe sidewalks will improve the sense of strong, safe neighborhoods.

The development of the Crew's Landing Historic Trail will be an asset to the community and to visitors. The two greatest resources in the Town are its public beach and the beautiful views of the Chesapeake Bay provided from the bluffs along the northern border of Town. This Trail will allow continued access to these attractions and make the Town a more desirable place to live. Improvements at the public beach will, similarly, increase the desirability of the Town. This will encourage development of additional housing and purchase of existing housing on the market.



**IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

**(3) What is your goal for of number of units to be created of affordable workforce housing, rental and homeownership? What populations (by income or special needs) will benefit from this increased access to affordable housing? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)**

The Town of Betterton has not set goals for increasing workforce housing, rentals, or homeownership. The initiatives described in previous sections will make the Town more attractive to potential homeowners and developers. The small town environment that Betterton provides along with improved public safety and amenities will attract people to live and work in the Town.

#### **IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

**(4) Which community groups or stakeholders will be key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section? *(Answer Space 4,000 characters)***

Mayor and Council, Town of Betterton, Betterton Community Development Corporation,  
SC Workgroup

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#### **IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

##### **E. Support transportation efficiency and access.**

**(1) What policies, strategies and projects are envisioned to strengthen the transportation network that affects the proposed SC Area? How will these initiatives support transportation choices (including walking, bicycling, bus or rail transit, and carpooling) or otherwise promote an efficient transportation network that integrates housing and transportation land uses? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)**

Improving walkways throughout the Town will make it more walkable and encourage strong neighborhoods. Easy access to the public beach by improving walkways will promote local use of the beach and public walking trails.

Development of the Crew's Landing Historic Trail will improve walking paths and bicycle paths through the historic area of Betterton. The SC Plan suggests integration of this path with the large tract of land on the western border of the Historic District. The Plan suggests connecting the Crew's Landing Historic Trail with a trail through this wooded area to provide attractive walking and biking opportunities.

Nearly all of the residents of Betterton drive to work outside of the Town but 76% of these residents work within Kent County. Carpooling options will be encouraged to decrease the carbon footprint and save money for commuters.

There is currently a small group of residents that work at the Aberdeen Proving Ground across the Bay from Betterton. There is a small boat that takes this group of workers across the Bay on a daily basis. Expansion of this service has been discussed by the SC Workgroup.

Because of Betterton's location at the end of State Route 292, its sustainability is based on its ability to brand itself as a destination town. Additional public transportation options will be investigated as the number of visitors and commuters demanding these services grows.

**IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

**(2) If applicable, describe the SC Area's connection or proximity to transportation centers (e.g. Metro, MARC, and light rail stations) and describe opportunities for Transit - Oriented Development (TOD). Will Plan strategies and projects contribute to jobs/housing balance or otherwise provide a mix of land uses that can be expected to reduce reliance on single-occupancy automobiles? (If transit or TOD is not applicable in your community, all points in this section will be based on questions 1 and 3) *(Answer Space 4,000 characters)***

Not applicable.

#### **IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

**(3) Which community groups or stakeholders will be key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section? *(Answer Space 4,000 characters)***

Town of Betterton, Mayor and Council, SC Workgroup, Betterton Community Development Corporation

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## **IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

### **F. Coordinating and Leveraging Policies and Investment**

**(1) What specific steps will the Sustainable Community Workgroup take to coordinate policies and funding streams to remove barriers to investment and maximize and increase funding in the proposed Sustainable Community Area? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)**

The Sustainable Community Workgroup will work with Betterton Mayor and Council to coordinate efforts to attain the goals of the SC Plan. The SC Workgroup and Town leadership are committed to enhancing the Town that we love. We are unified in our desire to preserve the best and most valued assets of our Town. These include the natural resources of the Sassafras River, Betterton Beach, and The Chesapeake Bay. We are also committed to preserving the historic character and small town nature of Betterton.

The SC Workgroup will work with Mayor and Council to prioritize the goals of the SC Plan. Then, SC Workgroup members will help to coordinate the organization and oversight of grant applications and resulting projects. The SC Workgroup will seek local, regional, and state partners to help fund and carry out the proposed projects. These projects fall into several broad categories:

1. Maintaining and preserving our natural resources. Projects will include building a new waste water treatment plant, decreasing storm water runoff, preserving the eroding bluff and shoreline, improve water and sewer infrastructure, upgrading the water supply to the Town, increasing the tree canopy and exploring alternative green energy sources.
2. Improving walkability and maintaining access to scenic walkways. Projects will include replacing sidewalks, developing an historic walking trail, maintaining access to Bayside Boulevard, rebuilding the public steps leading to the beach, and expanding existing walking paths and bike trails.
3. Enhancing the public beach and Main Street. Projects will include working with the County to improve parking and other amenities at the beach, planting trees and shrubs along Main Street and throughout the Town, encouraging some commercialization at the beach, and a facade upgrade program on Main Street.
4. Economic initiatives. Projects will include considering a solar array to supply electricity for the waste water treatment plant, expanding and improving internet access, and encouraging clean small businesses in the Town.

Sustainable Community designation will help to prioritize and fund the goals that the SC Workgroup has envisioned.

**IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

**(2) How is the proposed Sustainable Community Plan consistent with other existing community or comprehensive plans?** *(Answer Space 4,000 characters)*

The SC Plan is consistent with the Betterton Comprehensive Plan approved in December of 2005 and updated in 2009. Many of the goals and visions of the Comprehensive Plan are included in the five year SC Plan. The guiding principles in the Comprehensive Plan of controlled smart growth, natural resource preservation, and maintaining the character of the Town while encouraging small businesses and new development were incorporated into the SC Plan.

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#### **IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

**(3) How will the Plan help leverage and/or sustain more private sector investments?** *(Answer Space 4,000 characters)*

The SC Plan will create a unified set of goals for change and development within the Town. The proposed goals will make Betterton a more attractive and user friendly Town, attracting home buyers and developers. The expansion of green spaces, green streets, walking/bike trails, parks, and trees will contribute to the character of the Town and make it a more attractive place to live and work. Preservation of the natural resources will continue to make the Town an attraction for local residents and visitors.

The SC Plan will provide an organized, coherent blueprint for future growth and development. It will become a source of guidance for improvement of much needed infrastructure, laying the groundwork for more private sector investment.



## **V. PROGRESS MEASURES**

### **For the Plan parts of section IV (A through F):**

#### **(1) List the specific outcomes that the Plan seeks to produce. (Answer Space 4,000 characters)**

##### **A. Year One**

1. Work with the State Highway Department and Department of Natural Resources to modify storm water catchment area in front of Town Hall. Proximity to sidewalk is unsafe. Anticipated outcome--cover deep dropoff adjacent to sidewalk and create a safe walkway.
2. Work with the Sassafra River Association, DNR, Chesapeake Bay Trust to provide low cost rain barrels to the residents of Betterton. Encourage development of rain gardens throughout the Town and seek grant money to share costs with residents. Develop educational programs to discourage the use of fertilizer and pesticides on lawns. Anticipated outcome--increased use of rain barrels and rain gardens with decrease in storm water runoff.
3. Begin discussions with Kent County, Rigby Bluff Condominiums and the Town of Betterton to refurbish public steps, stabilize the foundation of the condominiums, and landscape the slope in front of the condominiums.
  - a. Obtain estimates and develop plans.
  - b. Talk to Kent County about donating land in front of the condominiums to the Town of Betterton.
  - c. Review previously developed engineering plans
  - d. Build steps and integrate into "Crew's Landing Historic Trail" as an historic walking trail.
4. Find an expert to evaluate erosion control and develop a plan for Bayside Avenue. The walking path and road on Bayside to be part of historic Crew's Landing Historic Trail. Obtain grant money and work with private land owners to begin to stabilize the bank as soon as possible. Plant shrubs and stabilizing plants on the bank.
5. Complete preparations and plans for Waste Water Treatment Plant. Anticipated outcome--begin construction in next 12-18 months.
6. Upgrade sidewalks throughout the Town. Pursue HCD Community Legacy Grant. Improve sidewalks to facilitate ADA compliance. Walkways will become part of Crew's Landing Historic Trail.

##### **B. Year Two**

1. Apply for grant to evaluate water and sewer infrastructure for improvements. Anticipated outcome--develop a plan for upgrading infrastructure.
  2. Apply for grants to improve urban tree canopy within the Town. Work with State Highway Administration to provide landscaping and beautification along Main Street and throughout the Town.
  3. Explore solar array for electric supply to Waste Water Treatment Plant. Consider collaboration with Washington College. Consider off-site location of array if no space in Town can be found. Develop educational program to encourage local residents to use solar and other alternative energy sources. Anticipated outcome--solar array for WWTP.
  4. Work with Kent County to upgrade the bath house at the public beach. Submit recreation grant on behalf of the County. Anticipated outcome--improved bath house facilities, increased use of beach.
  5. Explore methods for improving and enhancing Betterton Beach.
    - a. Public relations effort to advertise the beach.
    - b. Improve parking. Explore expanding parking lot further to the South.
    - c. Improve bath house.
    - d. Talk to Kent County about resuming life guard coverage.
    - e. Explore commercialization of the beach.
    - f. Control traffic and pedestrian crosswalks across Ericsson Avenue.
- Anticipated outcome--increased use of the beach. Enhance economic environment.

##### **C. Year Three**

1. Begin study of water treatment plant upgrades. Review study completed in 2011 which may still be valid. Obtain grants and perform upgrades.
  2. Expand Betterton Day
    - a. Volunteer groups to help the Betterton Volunteer Fire Company (BVFC) to organize Betterton Day.
    - b. Encourage joint effort between BVFC, BCDC, and Town.
    - c. Expand entertainment and vendors.
- Anticipated outcome--expand economic base, encourage Town pride, attract new visitors to the Town.

## **V. PROGRESS MEASURES**

**(2) And, list the specific benchmarks that will be used to measure progress toward these outcomes. (Answer Space 4,000 characters)**

**C. Year Three (continued)**

3. Explore improving internet service through ISP provider distributing internet service from existing fiber already supplied to the Town

**D. Year Four**

1. Apply for grants for facade upgrade program on Main Street and throughout the Town.
2. Develop Walking and Bike Paths throughout the Town and leading out of Betterton.
  - a. Work with County Commissioners to suggest widening shoulders and creating a network of bike trails.
3. Approach Dr. Leigh with large open property in trust on west side of Town--consider possible walking/bike trails through the Leigh tract. Connect to walkways on Idlewhile.
4. Work with U.S. postal service to establish a new post office in Betterton.

**SPECIFIC BENCHMARKS:**

1. Obtain grants for each project when needed.
2. Obtain partners in the County, State and in the community to obtain each goal.
3. Obtain buy-in from community residents where improvements on private lands are needed.
4. Within one year, work with State Highway Department to infill storm drain area and create safe sidewalk in front of Town Hall.
5. Within two years, replace sidewalks on Ericsson and Wheeler Avenues
6. Within two years, begin work on public steps leading to beach, landscape the slope in front of the condominiums and reinforce structure of condominiums.
7. Within three years, stabilize the bluff in front of Bayside Avenue.
8. Within four years, complete the Crew's Landing Historic Trail including Bayside Avenue Walkway, public steps, and Town sidewalks.
9. Within two years, complete the Waste Water Treatment Plant.
10. Within two years, evaluate water and sewer infrastructure. Begin improvements within 4 years.
11. Within 3 years, plant additional trees and shrubs to reach tree canopy of 45%
12. Within 3 years, improve the public beach and increase usership by 10%.
13. Within 5 years, begin water treatment plant upgrades.
14. Within 3 years, obtain partner to create internet ISP and connect to fiber.
15. Within 4 years, obtain grants for facade upgrades and beautification on Main Street.
16. Within 1 year, work with BVFC to improve Betterton Day.
17. Within 5 years, work with Kent County and State Highway Department to develop bike path from Betterton to Still Pond.

**REPLACE THIS PAGE WITH**  
**LOCAL GOVERNMENT SUPPORT**  
**RESOLUTIONS**

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**SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY APPLICATION  
DISCLOSURE AUTHORIZATION AND CERTIFICATION**

The undersigned authorizes the Department of Housing and Community Development (the "Department") to make such inquiries as necessary, including, but not limited to, credit inquiries, in order to verify the accuracy of the statements made by the applicant and to determine the creditworthiness of the applicant.

In accordance with Executive Order 01.01.1983.18, the Department advises you that certain personal information is necessary to determine your eligibility for financial assistance. Availability of this information for public inspection is governed by Maryland's Access to Public Records Act, State Government Article, Section 10-611 et seq. of the Annotated Code of Maryland (the "Act"). This information will be disclosed to appropriate staff of the Department or to public officials for purposes directly connected with administration of this financial assistance program for which its use is intended. Such information may be shared with State, federal or local government agencies, which have a financial role in the project. You have the right to inspect, amend, or correct personal records in accordance with the Act.

The Department intends to make available to the public certain information regarding projects recommended for funding in the Sustainable Community Plan. The information available to the public will include the information in this application, as may be supplemented or amended. This information may be confidential under the Act. If you consider this information confidential and do not want it made available to the public, please indicate that in writing and attach the same to this application.

You agree that not attaching an objection constitutes your consent to the information being made available to the public and a waiver of any rights you may have regarding this information under the Act.

**I have read and understand the above paragraph. Applicant's Initials:** \_\_\_\_\_

Anyone who knowingly makes, or causes to be made, any false statement or report relative to this financial assistance application, for the purposes of influencing the action of the Department on such application, is subject to immediate cancellation of financial assistance and other penalties authorized by law.

The undersigned hereby certifies that the Sustainable Communities Plan or Project(s) proposed in this Application can be accomplished and further certifies that the information set herein and in any attachment in support hereof is true, correct, and complete to the best of his/her knowledge and belief.

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Authorized Signature

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Print Name and Title

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Date